



Vermont's Transition to the Common Core State Standards: *English Language Arts*

Going Deeper into the Standards for ELA and
Understanding Implications for Instruction
(Resources Embedded)

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Forward: Professional Learning

The adoption of the *Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics* by the Vermont State Board of Education in August 2010 serves as a catalyst for the transformation of K-12 education in Vermont. Because the standards are anchored in the knowledge and skills for all students to be successful in college and career, the effectiveness of their implementation requires all educators to teach in a manner consistent with the intended purpose of common, rigorous standards. This expectation, in turn, will require sustained professional development efforts in all Vermont schools during the next four years.

This transition period between the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010 and the first administration of the assessment of the CCSS in 2015 requires a phased approach for Vermont schools and districts, with successive levels of implementation, each a prerequisite for the next phase.

- **Phase 1** consists of building awareness of the CCSS among educators, including familiarity with the rationale for having common standards across states.
- **Phase 2** requires going deeper into the standards to identify, understand and implement significant instructional shifts implicit in the mathematics and ELA standards.
- **Phases 3 and 4** will focus on curriculum adoption and accessing the full range of assessment strategies to ensure success for all students.

The [Implementation Timeline SY2011-12](#) and the [Professional Learning Transition Timeline](#) provide graphic representations of the Transition Phases, particularly Phase 2.

Each of the phases demands intensive professional development at the local level.

Research has shown that successful professional development means “a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers’ and principals’ effectiveness in raising student achievement,” *Learning Forward* (formerly the National Staff Development Council).

Learning Forward’s [Standards for Professional Learning](#) below outline characteristics of professional learning that lead to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results:

[Learning Communities:](#) Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.

Leadership: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.

Resources: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.

Data: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.

Learning Designs: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.

Implementation: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

Outcomes: Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

Educators in schools and districts across Vermont will need systems that incorporate these research-based elements of practice that work together to create a coherent, consistent culture of learning.

The Common Core State Standards, powered by effective professional development systems, are a significant driver of the transformation of education in Vermont. A truly effective implementation of the CCSS demands innovation in learning environments, technology and systems that support all students to meet rigorous 21st century expectations. This document serves as a guide for schools and districts in their implementation of the CCSS within the broader frame of transforming opportunities for all students. It will evolve and grow as new resources are created or identified and further connections are mapped to a new course for education in Vermont.

Vermont's Transition to the Common Core State Standards: *English Language Arts*

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** The writers of this document, "Vermont's Transition to the CCSS in ELA," recommend that educators, teacher leaders, and curriculum specialists read it in its entirety at least once. These intended users should then collaboratively consider how best to implement sections of it in ways that are consistent with the needs of the school/district and the best practice professional development standards developed by Learning Forward.

Introduction: The *Common Core State Standards* in English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Other Technical Subjects

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and other Technical Subjects (ELA) represent an opportunity to focus instruction, curriculum, and assessment on a rigorous, coherent, commonly-held set of expectations for all students graduating from secondary school.

College and Career Readiness for *All* Students

The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCR) and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were developed in a sequence, using principles of backward design (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). The CCR were written first to define the desired outcomes for literate individuals at the end of their education, while the K-12 standards represent the learning progressions that lead to these outcomes.

The introduction to the CCSS (page seven) contains a [list of descriptors](#) for students who are college and career ready in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language. As a starting point, we highly recommend that teachers meeting collaboratively in grade bands examine these descriptors and ask -- what are teacher practices at every grade level that promote student achievement in college and career-readiness?

The K-12 specific Common Core State Standards define end-of-the year expectations for each grade (K-8, 9-10, 11-12), that when achieved, are designed to provide prerequisite knowledge and skills for students to meet the broader expectations of the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards. Each ELA *strand* – reading, writing, speaking & listening, and language -- begins with the ten CCR standards that describe the broad goals of the strand, with each grade-level learning progression providing the specific expectations for the end of each grade.

CCR Reading #5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

CC Reading Informational (RI) #5 - Gr. 2: Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.

CC RI #5 - Gr. 5: Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.

CC RI #5 - Gr. 8: Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

CC RI #5 - Gr. 11-12: Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

The ELA Standards consist of many sections, all of which contribute to an understanding of the knowledge and skills needed to create literate individuals. The Standards are sequenced first by K-5 and then 6-12 grade bands.

Section	Purpose
Introduction	The Introduction provides an overview, including an explanation of the integrated model of learning, what is and is not in the document, and descriptions of characteristics of literate individuals.
Reading Standards, including Foundation Skills	<p>Reading Literature & Reading Informational Text Standards organized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key Ideas & Details ▪ Craft & Structure ▪ Integration of Knowledge & Ideas ▪ Range and Level of Text Complexity <p>The Foundational Skills (K-5 only) organized by --</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Print Concepts (K-1 only) ▪ Phonological Awareness (K-1 only) ▪ Phonics & Word Recognition (K-5) ▪ Fluency (K-5)
Writing Standards	<p>Writing Standards are organized by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Text Types & Purpose ▪ Production & Distribution of Writing ▪ Research to Build & Present Knowledge ▪ Range of Writing
Speaking & Listening Standards	<p>The Speaking & Listening Standards are organized by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comprehension & Collaboration ▪ Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas
Language Standards	<p>The Language Standards are organized by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conventions of Standard English ▪ Knowledge of Language ▪ Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science & Other Technical Subjects	<p>These Standards are organized by the same categories as the Reading Standards & anchored by the same CCR for reading but feature –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Separate reading standards for History/Social Studies and for Science and other technical subjects ▪ Common writing standards for all content areas
Appendix A	Appendix A provides the research basis for each of the strands, as well as expanded specificity for the expectations of the Foundational Skills and the Language Standards and a glossary of terms.
Appendix B	For each grade band, Appendix B provides specific titles & text exemplars that represent the complexity and breadth of the Reading Standards, along with sample performance tasks that are designed to assess critical thinking skills.
Appendix C	Appendix B contains samples of annotated student writing.

Unlike the CCSS for mathematics, most of the strands contained in the ELA Standards span the K-12 grades, with a few exceptions, noted in the chart below.

K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9-10	11-12
Foundational Skills: Print Concepts & Phonological Awareness										
Foundational Skills: Phonics & Word Recognition, Fluency										
Reading Literature & Informational text, including literary nonfiction: Balance K-5 = 50% literature* & 50%* informational text						Reading Literature – stories, drama, poetry: Balance grade 6-8 = 45%* Balance gr. 9-12 = 30%*				
						Reading informational, including literary nonfiction: Balance 6-8 = 55%* Balance gr. 9-12 = 70%*				
						Literacy (Reading) in History/Social Studies, Science, and Other Technical Subjects				
Writing Standards: Balance of Text Types: grades 4 – opinion = 30%; information = 35%; narrative = 35%						Literacy (Writing) in History/Social Studies, Science, and Other Technical Subjects: Grade 8 – argument = 35%; information = 35%; narrative = 30% Grade 12 – argument = 40%; information = 40%; narrative = 20%				
Speaking & Listening Standards										
Language Standards, including vocabulary acquisition and use										

*Percentages represent across the school day/month/year.

A thorough understanding of the CCSS must begin with a close reading of the standards themselves, as well as the introduction and the appendices. Educators should be brought together to examine both the grade-specific standards for each strand and the progressions that build knowledge and skills from grade to grade. Discussion should focus on the meaning of each standard, **including** content and skills, and its implications for instruction, curriculum, and assessment.

Beyond a close reading, the CCSS will require intensive, sustained professional development initiatives at the school and district levels during the next several years in order to effectively implement the instructional shifts in the CCSS. There is new learning for *all* educators implicit in the concepts contained in the standards. The Vermont Department of Education, together with a group of our professional development partners (see pp. 31-34), has defined priorities for going deeper into the instructional shifts implicit in the CCSS for ELA. All Vermont educators must be

thoughtfully engaged in the ongoing professional development necessary to improve the learning of all students in the 21st century.

What Are Instructional Priorities for Successful Implementation of the CCSS?

Recommendations

- K–12: Complex Texts for *All* Students
- The Importance of Vocabulary Instruction at Every Grade Level
- K-2: What Educators Can Do *Now* to Implement the CCSS
- K–5: Integrating Literacy Standards in *All* Content Areas
- 6–12: Integrating Literacy Standards in *All* Content Areas

Each Recommendation has three essential elements:

- A rationale for the selection of this priority
- Specific recommendations for professional development that are consistent with the standards identified by Learning Forward
- A range of vetted resources and references for schools/districts to use with educators at all grade levels

“Vermont’s Transition to the CCSS in English Language Arts” lays out in detail the instructional priorities that are the most significant and that will take both time and effort to fully implement in Vermont classrooms. Many educators have already begun to explore how the CCSS will impact their existing curriculum and instructional practices. However, all educators and students will benefit -- in the short and long term -- from the guidance in these recommendations for professional learning. There is significant work to be done, and we urge curriculum and teacher leaders to review this document carefully and make thoughtful choices for the necessary transition in their schools. We envision this document evolving as new resources and information become available.

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K-12: Complex Texts for *All* Students

Research has identified a wide gap between the reading demands placed on students in the K-12 classroom and the reading demands of college and career. For a variety of reasons, the level of texts students are exposed to during K-12 public education is not preparing them for college and career-level reading. This gap results in increased numbers of students taking non-credit remedial courses and creates frustration on the part of students who lack the knowledge and skills to be successful in the 21st century.

Many Vermont elementary schools are using leveled texts for instructional and assessment purposes. This practice differentiates reading materials so that they are tailored to meet the needs of individual students. It is also critical, however, for *all* students to have access to the same, grade-appropriate, high-quality text that is not paraphrased into simpler language. Access alone is not sufficient to accomplish the task. Students *at every grade level* must have explicit instruction in comprehending more complex texts in order to be prepared for the higher levels of reading required for college and career. This instruction will require multiple close readings, in-depth vocabulary study, and critical thinking about the ideas and concepts in the text.

At the middle and high school levels, the most rigorous and complex reading is often reserved for those students in the honors or the Advanced Placement courses. Middle school and high school educators *across disciplines* must be prepared to engage *all* students in asking critical questions about the complex texts so essential to a thorough understanding of their content. Widespread implementation across the state would be a powerful driver of equity for all students and transformation of high school education. Exchanging “mile-wide and inch-deep” content/instruction in the disciplines for skill acquisition and deep knowledge-building will result in more students having more choices for post-high school education.

Professional learning about text complexity will require an understanding of the characteristics of complex text, an ability to evaluate the complexity of reading material which supports deep content knowledge, and an understanding of what explicit instruction of complex texts looks like in the classroom. The recommendations and resources below are designed for *all* educators, working together in various grade-level and vertical groupings.



Hayes [Wolfer, and Wolf's 1996] analysis indicated that the wording of school books published from 1963 forward for eighth graders was as simple as that for fifth graders before 1963, while the wording of twelfth-grade literature texts published after 1963 was simpler than seventh-grade texts published before 1963.

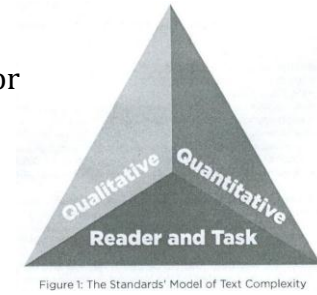
--Adams, “The Challenge of Advanced Texts,” 2009.



Recommendations for Professional Development:

Professional development for K-12 educators should --

- Begin with a close reading of CC Reading Standard 10 through the grades and a discussion of implications for various grade levels.
- Foster understanding of the three parts of the text complexity triangle (CCSS, Appendix A, p. 4 & resource # 1).
- Help teachers learn how to use the three components of the triangle to determine the appropriate complexity of text for use with students (resource # 1).
- Foster familiarity and application of the text complexity rubrics on both CCSS exemplars and classroom texts (resource #3).
- Include models for explicit instruction of complex text.
- Involve educators in ongoing collaborative discussions about texts used in their classrooms.



We recommend that *schools/districts* identify common, appropriately complex texts for instruction at each grade level to ensure consistency of reading rigor for all students, while promoting fluency through independent reading.

For further study:

- Read the research behind the CCSS for reading (resources #5 - #8).
- Learn about an example of one quantitative text measure, the Lexile[®] measurement system, and its relationship to the CCSS (resource #9).

Resources/References:

These resources are intentionally sequenced to be used in an ongoing, embedded, professional development process.

1. Kansas Department of Education (DOE) ELA Specialists' [Text Complexity PowerPoint](#): a webinar/powerpoint for curriculum leaders and educators adapted by VT DOE content specialists with permission – one hour .
Essential, ongoing, interactive follow-up:
 - Have educators in grade band teams examine exemplars from *Appendix B*, using the text complexity rubric for both literary and informational texts.
 - Have educators in grade band teams select texts from their classrooms and use a text complexity rubric to identify appropriateness and areas for explicit instruction (e.g., vocabulary, text structure, levels of meaning).
 - Have educators locate short complex text, both literary and informational, and work together to plan scaffolding and modeling for class using the provided models (resource #4).

2. The Kansas DOE website has a template for using the all components of the text complexity triangle to evaluate texts for complexity, along with the model template completed for several exemplar texts at different grade bands. These can be found in the “Analyzing Text Complexity” section of their website: <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4605>.
3. There have been several rubrics for determining the complexity of text based on the criteria in Appendix A, p. 6.
 - More prescriptive: Kansas DOE website (web address is above)
 - Less prescriptive: VT-DOE [Literary](#) and [Informational](#) Text Complexity rubrics
4. Educators at all levels must examine [models for explicit instruction](#) of complex texts in order to develop their own.
 - [Grade band 6-8](#) Annotated Teaching Sample for Complex (Literary) Text: excerpt from Chapter Two, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain.
 - [Grades 8 and 9-10](#) Student instructional guide to an article from *U.S. News & World Report* on the Crusades
 - [Grade Band 9-10](#) Annotated Teaching Sample for Complex (Literary) Text: *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II scene ii.
 - [Grade band 9-10](#) Annotated Teaching Sample for Complex (Informational) Text: *The Gettysburg Address*, Abraham Lincoln

For further study:

5. “[Why Text Complexity Matters](#),” an article by David Liben written in January 2011, highlights the critical research behind issues of text complexity and student understanding.
6. Kentucky DOE published an informative and helpful article about text complexity in their [May 2011 Literacy Link](#).
7. “[Publisher’s Criteria for the CCSS in ELA and Literacy 3-12](#)” (Coleman & Pimentel) was written as a resource for curriculum developers and publishers to guide their development of literacy materials that align with the CCSS. The Criteria document also describes best practices in literacy for use with *all* educators. The main goals of these criteria are for students to be able to understand rich and increasingly complex text, to extract evidence/meaning from their reading, and ultimately to be able to express their understanding of texts through effective speaking and writing.
8. In 2009, Marilyn Jager Adams wrote a thorough review of the research on text complexity and vocabulary. The writers of the CCSS relied heavily on her findings for the research basis for the CCSS in reading and language. Her

review can be found at: <http://www.childrenofthecode.org/library/MJA-ChallengeofAdvancedTexts.pdf> (This resource is also found in the Vocabulary section.)

9. MetaMetrics, primary developers of Lexile measures of text complexity, have realigned their Lexile map with the CCSS grade bands. Among other valuable resources, their website also features clear explanations of the text complexity triangle and a “Find a Book” tool for locating books of a particular Lexile range.
<http://www.lexile.com/using-lexile/lexile-measures-and-the-ccssi/>

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The Importance of Vocabulary Instruction at *Every* Level

Research supports the need for an increased emphasis on direct vocabulary instruction using a quality, systemic approach directed and guided by teachers. From birth children need frequent, varied and rich language experiences to build a strong foundation of content knowledge and comprehension skills. Studies have shown vocabulary breadth and depth play a key role in promoting comprehension and academic success.

Further research suggests that substantial gaps in the level of vocabulary are evident by the time children enter preschool or kindergarten, and vocabulary gaps evident in grade two will likely widen throughout elementary school (Biemiller and Slonim, 2001). In addition, a significant lag in the development of literacy skills of one to two years observed in children of low socio-economic status in kindergarten still persists in third grade and beyond (Cannon & Karoly, 2007; Hart & Risley, 2003). This research supports the need for finding strategies in the early years to promote vocabulary development which will prepare children for comprehending grade level texts in the upper grades.



“Teaching vocabulary will not guarantee success in reading, just as learning to identify printed words will not guarantee success in reading. However, lacking adequate word identification skills or adequate vocabulary will ensure failure.”

--Biemiller, 2010



The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) require providing students with varied vocabulary experiences to be able to successfully comprehend the more complex texts they are reading. It is evident that without continual exposure to word meanings in a variety of contexts, by grades three or four many students will continue to demonstrate challenges comprehending grade level texts and the inevitable low achievement (Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990; National Reading Panel, 2000).

All students need ongoing, explicit vocabulary instruction in the classroom to minimize the word gap and its negative effects on reading comprehension (Biemiller and Slonim, 2001). Direct vocabulary instruction should feature words that research has shown to be the most critical for reading comprehension, as well as words *not* known by students, which the teacher learns through formative pre-assessments. However, direct instruction alone is not adequate enough to address the gap. The vocabulary embedded in rich, complex texts at all grade levels will greatly enlarge the quantity of words in the student’s word bank. Marilyn Jager

Adams makes just this point in her review of vocabulary research, “The Challenge of Advanced Texts:”

Teach the key words and concepts [in complex informational text] directly, engaging students in using them and discussing them so as to be sure they are well anchored. As students learn the core vocabulary, core concepts, and overarching schemata of the domain, they will become ready to explore its subtopics, reading as many texts as needed or appropriate on each subtopic in turn ... as their expertise on, say, Mars expands, they will find themselves in far better stead to read about Venus, Jupiter, earth sciences and on and on (pp. 28-29).

Recommendations for Professional Development:

All students benefit from quality early literacy experiences to minimize the gap in vocabulary acquisition and use. Educators need to provide instruction that begins at the developmental level of the student and then continues throughout his/her education.


Professional development in vocabulary instruction for all educators should --

- Begin with collaborative opportunities for teachers to discuss the CCSS Language Standards #4, #5, and #6 and Reading Standard #4, and compare them to current classroom practices in vocabulary instruction within grade levels and across grade bands.
- Provide opportunities for teachers to align their practices and integrate the CCSS into their current instruction. Vocabulary instruction should be guided by these instructional principles:
 - Students should be active in developing their understanding of words and their own ways to learn them.
 - Students should demonstrate application of vocabulary instruction both in writing and speaking tasks.
 - Students should have daily exposure to multiple sources of information to learn words through a variety of contexts.
 - Vocabulary instruction should be integrated across all subject areas.
 - Teachers should engage students in vocabulary activities such as explicit teaching of word meanings.
- Include understanding of the three-Tier or 4-zone model for selecting words for deep instruction (resources #1 and #2).
- Create a school-wide focus on vocabulary instruction K-5 (resources #3 - #6).
 - Have educators work in grade level/grade band teams to promote knowledge of the concept of Tier Instruction and the importance of teaching Tier 2 words.

- Have educators select a text from their classrooms to identify words critical to comprehension.
- Enhance teacher ability to assess students' vocabulary knowledge through formative, interim, and summative means.

Resources/References:

These resources are intentionally prioritized to be used in an ongoing, embedded, professional development process.

1. Graves, M. F. *Teaching individual words: One Size does not fit all*. New York: Teachers College Press and IRA, 2009.
This informative powerpoint on vocabulary instruction will help teachers understand and implement increasingly effective levels of instruction.  Individual Words_Graves-2-1-1.
2. Beck, I., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2002. This book provides practical, engaging strategies for vocabulary instruction. It contains many concrete examples, sample classroom dialogues, and exercises for teachers.
3. Blachowicz, C., Fisher, P. J., & Taffe, S. W. *Integrated vocabulary instruction: Meeting the needs of diverse learners*. Learning Point Associates, 2005.
<http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/literacy/vocabulary.pdf>
4. Biemiller, A. *Words worth teaching: Closing the vocabulary gap*. Columbus, OK: SRA/McGraw Hill, 2010. This research-based book and CD contain an exhaustive, 500+ word list with word meanings rated for appropriateness at grades 2 – 6.
5. Graves, M., ed. *Essential readings on vocabulary instruction*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 2009.
Each of the 14 chapters was written by recognized leaders in the area of vocabulary and learning – excellent for a month-by-month book study.
6. Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
7. Hirsch, E.D., Jr. "Reading comprehension requires knowledge of words and the world." American Federation of Teachers, Spring, 2003.
http://www.google.com/search?sourceid=navclient&ie=UTF-8&rlz=1T4GPEA_enUS312&q=e+d+hirsch+words+in+the++world

8. Dr. Elfrieda Hiebert, president of Textproject, Inc. developed strategies for teachers to engage struggling readers in appropriate literary and informational texts which include resources for vocabulary integrated with reading instruction.
<http://www.textproject.org/topics/vocabulary-informational-and-narrative-texts/>
9. Using the Frayer model with students will promote vocabulary development. This instructional strategy promotes critical thinking, activates student's prior knowledge to develop connections with new concepts, and helps students to identify and understand unfamiliar vocabulary.
<http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/FrayerModel.html>
10. The Virginia Department of Education website has a variety of instructional videos in the area of elementary reading comprehension and vocabulary Strategies that teachers can incorporate into their classrooms and discuss in collaborative groups:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/english/elementary/reading/reading_vocabulary_strategies.shtml
11. Fostering Vocabulary Development in the Elementary Classroom
<http://www.ciera.org/library/presos/2002/2002csi/2002csicarlisle/02csiicv.pdf>

For further study:

12. In 2009, Marilyn Jager Adams wrote a thorough review of the research on text complexity and vocabulary. The writers of the CCSS relied heavily on her findings for the research basis for the CCSS in reading and language. Her review can be found at: <http://www.childrenofthecode.org/library/MJA-ChallengeofAdvancedTexts.pdf> (This resource is also found in the Text Complexity section.)

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K-2: What Educators Can Do *Now* to Implement the CCSS

The assessment of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is not slated to begin until the spring of 2015 with the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). What does this mean for our current K-2 students? What does this mean for Vermont educators?

Students entering kindergarten 2011-2012 school year will not participate in any NECAP assessments; those entering first grade will participate in NECAP assessments in one year (2013); and those entering second grade will participate in NECAP assessments in each of two years (2012 and 2013). None of these students will ever take a NECAP writing assessment. This assessment time frame empowers educators to integrate sooner rather than later the instructional shifts implicit in CCSS into classroom practice to support greater student learning.

Recommendations for Professional Development:

All educators need to provide instruction that begins at the developmental levels of children and moves them forward in their learning. Professional development for educators at the K-2 grade level should --

- Begin with a close reading of the K-2 CCSS – strand by strand – with discussion focused on curricular and instructional implications within and across grade levels.
- Follow with a close reading and discussion of the [“Publisher’s Criteria for the CCSS in ELA and Literacy K-2”](#) (Coleman & Pimentel), written as a resource for curriculum developers and publishers to guide their development of literacy materials that align with the CCSS. The Criteria document also describes best practices in literacy instruction for use with *all* educators. The main goals of these criteria are for students to be able to understand rich and increasingly complex text, to extract evidence/meaning from their reading, and ultimately to be able to express their understanding of texts through effective speaking and writing.



*“Far too often
students who have
fallen behind
are given only less
complex texts rather
than the support
they need to read texts
at the appropriate level
of complexity.”*

-- Coleman & Pimentel.
Publishers criteria
K-2, 2011.



- Focus grade-level and grade-band teams on discussion of learning priorities and instructional shifts within each strand below (reading, writing, speaking & listening, and language).

Reading Standards for Literature & Informational Text

Instruction should --

- Provide a balance of literary and informational text in both independent and instructional settings in order to begin to build strong background and content knowledge, e.g., arrange classroom books by topic, rather than by labels of fiction/nonfiction.
- Provide intentional interactive read-aloud opportunities and discussion of high-quality grade-appropriate complex texts for all students to understand.
- Incorporate direct instruction of high-quality, grade-appropriate, complex texts for instructional and independent use with all students. (Refer to the CCSS Appendix B for exemplars.)

Reading Standards: Foundational Skills/Early Reading Skills

Instruction should --

- Provide consistent and daily opportunities for intentional immersion in a sequence of foundational skills (i.e., print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and fluency) with a focus on proficiency defined by the CCSS.
- Incorporate formative and interim/benchmark assessments to inform instruction that supports the CCSS Foundational Skills.
- Provide students with authentic and cognitively engaging literary activities, i.e., posing critical questions and writing tasks.

Writing Standards

Instruction should --

- Continue to work on techniques and strategies for *narrative* writing.
- Focus on *opinion* and *informational* writing, using accurate details/evidence from rich and engaging complex text.
- Focus on frequent, short, and shared research to build knowledge.
- Foster solid understanding of topic, while providing a clear structure to guide students' thinking.
- Utilize technology to produce, publish, and distribute students' writing with guidance and support.

Speaking and Listening Standards

Instruction should --

- Provide opportunities for conversation, collaboration and knowledge-building with diverse partners (e.g., older/younger students, adults, ...).
- Include and follow agreed-upon rules for discussion.

Language Standards

Instruction should --

- Ensure student acquisition and use of increasingly sophisticated vocabulary.
- Promote knowledge of language for effective communication, including age appropriate conventions of standard English.

Resources/References:

These resources are intentionally categorized by CCSS strand and are intended to be used in an ongoing, embedded, professional development process.

Reading

1. CCSS, Appendix B.
This resource provides titles for and excerpts of appropriately complex read-aloud stories, poetry, and informational texts for grade bands K-1 and 2-3.
2. Hoyt, L. *Interactive read-aloud K-6*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2009.
These interactive lessons provide a foundation for oral language development and provide students with opportunities to broaden their thinking.
3. www.readwritethink.org provides educators and students with classroom practices and resources for reading and writing; search by grade level.
4. Harvey, S. & Goudvis, A. *Comprehension tool kit*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2011. This resource provides teaching and learning that engages and encourages “strategic thinking and explicit instruction via modeling, practice, and application.”

Writing

1. Wood-Ray, K. *Study-driven*. Heinemann. 2006. This resource provides a framework for planning units of study in the writing workshop using student examples. Students are immersed in thinking about what they write and are involved in “a close study of published texts that supports their learning, leads them to a better understanding of the traits of good writing, and motivates them to become more accomplished writers.”
2. Duke, N.K. and Bennett-Armistead, V. S. *Reading and writing informational text in the primary Grades*. New York: Scholastic Press. 2003.
3. Vermont Writing Collaborative. *Writing for understanding: Using backward design to help all students write effectively*. Authentic Education, 2008. This text explains the “writing for understanding” approach to direct writing instruction. Its premise is that for students to write effectively, they need both solid content knowledge and a clear structure through which to present

that knowledge. The book gives teachers a flexible system for designing instruction that takes this into account.

4. www.writingfix.com. Northern Nevada Writing Project provides lessons, prompts and resources for writing in the K-2 classroom for educators; look for mentor texts for picture books and Six Traits for K-2 students.
5. www.readwritethink.org. Provides educators and students with classroom practices and resources for reading and writing; search by grade level.
6. Calkins, L. & colleagues. *Units of study*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2010. This yearlong writing curriculum, presented in a series of books provides a detailed description of the teacher/author's goals, an assessment rubric that guides their practice, and provides the exact wording for teaching students.
7. *National Geographic nonfiction reading/writing workshop K-6*. Leveled texts and resources that focus on specific instructional reading and writing strategies.

Language/Vocabulary

1. Biemiller, A. *Words worth teaching: Closing the vocabulary gap*. Columbus, OH: SRA/McGraw Hill, 2010.
This research-based book and CD contain an exhaustive, 500+ word list with word meanings rated for appropriateness at grades 2–6.
2. Beck, I. & McKeown, M. *Text talk* (K-3). Scholastic. A read-aloud approach to enhance children's comprehension and acquisition of vocabulary.
3. Johnston, P. *Choice words*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2004.
This author provides "instructive examples of the apparently ordinary words, phrases, and uses of language that are pivotal in the orchestration of the classroom. Grounded in a study of accomplished literacy teachers, the book demonstrates how the things we say (and don't say) have surprising consequences for the literate lives of our students."

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K-5: Integrating Literacy Standards in All Content Areas

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) recognize and affirm that integrating literacy skills and content in the various disciplines throughout the curriculum provides a context for deep learning. Complex, content-specific informational text, including literary nonfiction, offer ongoing opportunities for students to gain rich vocabulary experiences, essential concepts, broad content knowledge, and complex thinking skills. While the content of each discipline is important, it is also essential for students to connect their knowledge across disciplines. Application of consistent reading and writing standards in the content areas will help students achieve success as literate citizens, able to read complex informational text, extract and evaluate evidence for accuracy and credibility, and integrate evidence into focused, coherent writing that demonstrates critical thinking about content.



“There is a well-researched connection between background knowledge and academic achievement.”
--Marzano, 2004



Content that builds background knowledge and vocabulary encourages students to seek more knowledge and to improve their comprehension skills. Integration of content and literacy accomplishes a dual purpose: it strengthens understanding of content by continued practice, and it provides repeated opportunities for the internalization of literacy skills.

The following sections contain general recommendations for professional development and resources that are applicable across content areas, followed by recommendations and resources specific to social studies and to science.

Recommendations for Professional Development and Resources that Cross All Content Areas:

Professional development for K-5 educators should --

- Begin with a collaborative reading of the CCSS for Reading Informational Text K-5, Writing Standards K-5, and Speaking and Listening Standards K-5.
- Include understanding of the importance of building content knowledge; i.e., “Staying on Topic Within a Grade and Across Grades,” CCSS p. 33, and the concept of “gradating/bootstrapping” texts to build content knowledge

specified in the Grade Expectations for social studies, science, arts, and other content areas (resource #1).

- Engage teachers in activities that support building increasing content knowledge, such as reviewing curriculum across the grades for coherence and the building of deep content knowledge.
- Include opportunities for teachers to select appropriate text based on an understanding of the factors involved in selecting appropriately complex texts (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, reader and task) and then decide how to use the texts effectively for instruction (see K-12: Text Complexity for All Students section).
- Model strategies that will enable teachers to frequently engage students in short, meaningful, focused research tasks (resources #2, #3, #4, and #5).
- Utilize technology to enhance learning opportunities.

Resources/References applicable to All Content Areas:

1. Kintsch, E., & Hampton, S. (2009). Supporting cumulative knowledge building through reading. *Adolescent literacy, field tested: Effective solutions for every classroom*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
“Bootstrapping” or “Gradating” Text is a concept-based approach to building content knowledge over time. This resource provides both the research basis behind the approach and practical application for content area instruction that includes a deep understanding of text.
2. Harvey, S., & Goudvis, A. (2000). *Strategies that work: teaching comprehension to enhance understanding*. York, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
<http://www.stenhouse.com/shop/pc/viewprd.asp?idProduct=310&r=&REFERER=>
Strategies that Work provides teachers with ways to use short text such as picture books, newspaper and magazine articles, and poetry to teach comprehension. Included in *Strategies That Work* are samples of student work, prior to, during, and after the learning (synthesis and reflection). An extensive bibliography includes an excellent list of content-area texts in the science and social studies area.
3. Harvey, S. (1998). *Nonfiction matters: reading, writing, and research in grades 3-8*. York, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.
Nonfiction Matters outlines specific instructional strategies for educators necessary to be successful in scaffolding science and social studies writing tasks, which are informational or informed opinion.

4. Vermont Writing Collaborative. (2008). *Writing for understanding: using backward design to help all students write effectively*. Hopewell, NJ: Authentic Education.

This book by some of Vermont's most knowledgeable teachers of writing begins from the premise that students must thoroughly understand their topic before they can capably write about it. Using the Backward Design approach championed by Wiggins and McTighe (2005), the writers explore the dimensions and structures of writing, which enable students to use evidence from multiple sources to support a focus based on critical thinking.

5. Wood-Ray, K. (2006). *Study-driven*. Heinemann.

This resource provides a framework for planning units of study in the writing workshop using student examples. Students are immersed in thinking about what they write and are involved in "a close study of published texts that supports their learning, leads them to a better understanding of the traits of good writing, and motivates them to become more accomplished writers."

Recommendations for Professional Development and Resources for Integrating Social Studies and Literacy:

1. Understand the range of informational text, including *literary nonfiction* (primary source documents, biographies, autobiographies, speeches,) and embed close reading of them into social studies lessons and units.
2. Use the inquiry process for short, focused-research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
3. Explore a variety of strategies for using the inquiry process (e.g., webquests, inquiry charts,).
4. Include strategies for using primary source documents to gain different perspectives of a time period or an event.

A single, multi-layered resource for each of the recommendations above is the Vermont Social Studies Inquiry collaborative wiki:
<http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/w/page/4662342/FrontPage>

The wiki contains the following resources and more:

- Materials that explain the inquiry process in a social studies context
 - Educator-created, inquiry-based social studies units for elementary, middle, and high school levels centered on primary source documents
 - Links to the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and other sources of historical documents
 - Tools for analysis of historical documents
 - Social studies content
5. The Flow of History available at: <http://www.flowofhistory.org/>. The Flow of History is a history education network for Vermont and New Hampshire communities along the Connecticut River watershed. Each year Flow of History offers book discussions, primary source workshops, and summer institutes for teachers focused on a yearly theme. This website contains numerous tools for using informational text and primary sources in the social studies classroom.
 6. Schmidt, L. (2007). *Social Studies that sticks: How to bring content and concepts to life*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
 7. Vest, K. (2005). *Using Primary Sources in the Classroom*. Huntington Beach, CA. Shell Education.

Specific Recommendations for Professional Development and Resources for Integrating Science and Literacy:

1. Worth, K., Winokur, J., Crissman, S., Heller-Winokur, M., & Davis, M. (2009) *Science and literacy: a natural fit*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, <http://www.heinemann.com/products/E02127.aspx>. *Science and Literacy: A Natural Fit* is a professional development resource organized to help provide educators integrate speaking, listening, and writing with science content, using the inquiry process.

This guide is organized into eight modules, which are most effective when teachers take responsibility for learning one module and then teaching it to others in a vertical team collaboration:

- **“Foundations”** (Modules 1 and 2) provide a common inquiry experience for students and emphasizes the importance of the questions teachers ask.
- **“Classroom Talk”** (Modules 3, 4, and 5) teach how to develop “a culture of talk” -- how to create a “gathering ideas” discussion and how to implement a “making-meaning” talk.
- **“Writing”** (Modules 6, 7, and 8) detail the process of developing and implementing science notebooks in the classroom, and show how to

take the writing beyond the notebook to a more polished piece of writing.

2. Fulwiler, B., R. (2007). *Writing in science: How to scaffold instruction to support learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
<http://www.heinemann.com/products/E01070.aspx>
 Provide opportunities for educators to see how there is room in the curriculum for science and writing and how writing strategies can be taught using science as the content.
Writing in Science details practical and proven methods for supporting improvement in how students write and think about science. *Writing in Science* shows teachers how they can create time to teach both science content and writing skills. This book provides model student notebook entries, graphic organizers, and guiding questions to focus science-based units.
3. Michaels, S., Shouse, A. W., & Schweingruber, H. A. (2008). *Ready, set, science: Putting research to work in the K-8 science classroom*. National Research Council of the National Academies.
Ready, Set, Science was written to begin to change the paradigm of science instruction. Changing the paradigm included the need for science instruction to focus on “making thinking visible” through talk and argument, modeling and representation. There is a strong correlation between those goals and the CCSS for Speaking and Listening. Two chapters in this book explain and model some of the strategies that are used to encourage discourse and writing.
4. Embed explicit instruction of appropriately complex and relevant informational text.

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6–12: Integrating Literacy Standards in *All* Content Areas

The decision to include in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Literacy Standards for History/Social Studies, Science, and Other Technical Subjects in the CCSS for English Language Arts validates what many educators, administrators and professional organizations have been saying for years: that in-depth, consistent instruction in reading and writing skills *in all subject areas* is necessary for students to be fully prepared for the demands of college and career.



According to the NAEP guidelines adopted by the writers of the CCSS, by the time students reach 12th grade, 70% of their school-based reading should be informational and 80% of their writing should be argument and informational (CCSS, p. 5). Effective implementation of direct instruction in complex texts, vocabulary acquisition and use, writing processes, and speaking/listening and language skills requires a purposeful shift in focus, from “a mile-wide, inch-deep” approach to ever-increasing content to deep understanding at the conceptual level – and then practice, practice, practice throughout the school day.

Equipping middle and high school educators with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively integrate reading and writing standards is no small task but will, indeed, transform secondary education. The CCSS define the literacy skills that students need to learn. Application of consistent, rigorous reading and writing standards in the content areas will help students achieve success as literate citizens, able to read complex informational text, extract and evaluate evidence for accuracy and credibility, and integrate evidence into focused, coherent writing that demonstrates critical thinking about content.

Using writing based on evidence from rich, complex texts to assess understanding and having common, rigorous expectations for reading and writing processes *enhance*, not diminish, students’ understanding of content.

Integration of content and literacy accomplishes a dual purpose: it strengthens understanding of content by continued practice, and it provides repeated opportunities for the internalization of literacy skills. The following sections contain

*“... what little
expository reading
students are asked to do
is too often
of the superficial variety
that involves
skimming and scanning
for particular, discrete
pieces of information;
such reading is unlikely
to prepare students for the
cognitive demand of
true understanding of
complex texts.”*
-CCSS, Appendix A, p. 3



general recommendations for professional development and resources that are applicable across content areas, followed by recommendations and resources specific to history/social studies and to science.

Recommendations for Professional Development Applicable to All Content Areas:

Professional development for *all 6-12 science and social studies* educators should --

- Include dedicated time for collaboration of educators in various combinations, particularly crossing middle school/high school levels.
- Begin with a close reading of the Literacy Standards for History/Social Studies, Science, and Other Technical Subjects and discuss current instructional practices and curriculum.
- Provide educators with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement effective classroom practices:
 - frequent opportunities for student reading of complex informational text with connections to instructional content (see SS resource #1)
 - frequent opportunities for students to identify and evaluate a variety of perspectives on an issue (see SS resources #2 and #3; science resources #2 and #3).
 - support for students in developing the skill of using evidence from informational reading for analysis, reflection and sustained research (see SS resource #3 and #4; science resources #4 and #5).
 - engagement of students in meaningful collaborative discourse around issues related to content concepts (see SS resource #5; science resources #6 and #7).
 - opportunities for students to communicate ideas in speaking and writing (see SS resources #5, p. 27; science resources #8 and #9).



*“..To develop competence in an area of inquiry, students must:
(a) have a deep foundation of factual knowledge,
(b) understand facts and ideas in the context of a conceptual framework, and
(c) organize knowledge in ways that facilitate retrieval and application.”*

-Donovan, Bransford and Pellegrino 1999



Practical Recommendations for School-wide Integration:

- Come to a common commitment across content areas to embed complex texts in a way that is manageable for educators and not overwhelming for students.
- Embed examples of complex texts into curriculum: op-ed/editorial writing, primary sources, essays, articles from high quality publications (e.g., one Vermont high school bought a subscription to *Atlantic Monthly* – delivered at home -- for each of its seniors; teachers collaborated on which articles to study closely during class time).
- Ensure frequent opportunities for students to write in response to complex texts; instruction begins with a focusing question to foster essays which emphasize evidence from the text to support assertions.
- Incorporate writing tasks in all end-of-unit/course assessments.
- Plan in-class, short, focused-research projects.
- Collectively and regularly examine student work for effectiveness and evidence of deep understanding.

Recommendations for Professional Development and Resources for Integrating History/Social Studies and Literacy:

8. Understand the range of informational text, including *literary nonfiction* (primary source documents, biographies, opinion editorials, essays, speeches,) and embed close reading of them into history/social studies lessons and units.
9. Use the inquiry process for short, focused-research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
10. Include strategies for using primary source documents to gain different perspectives of a time period or an event.

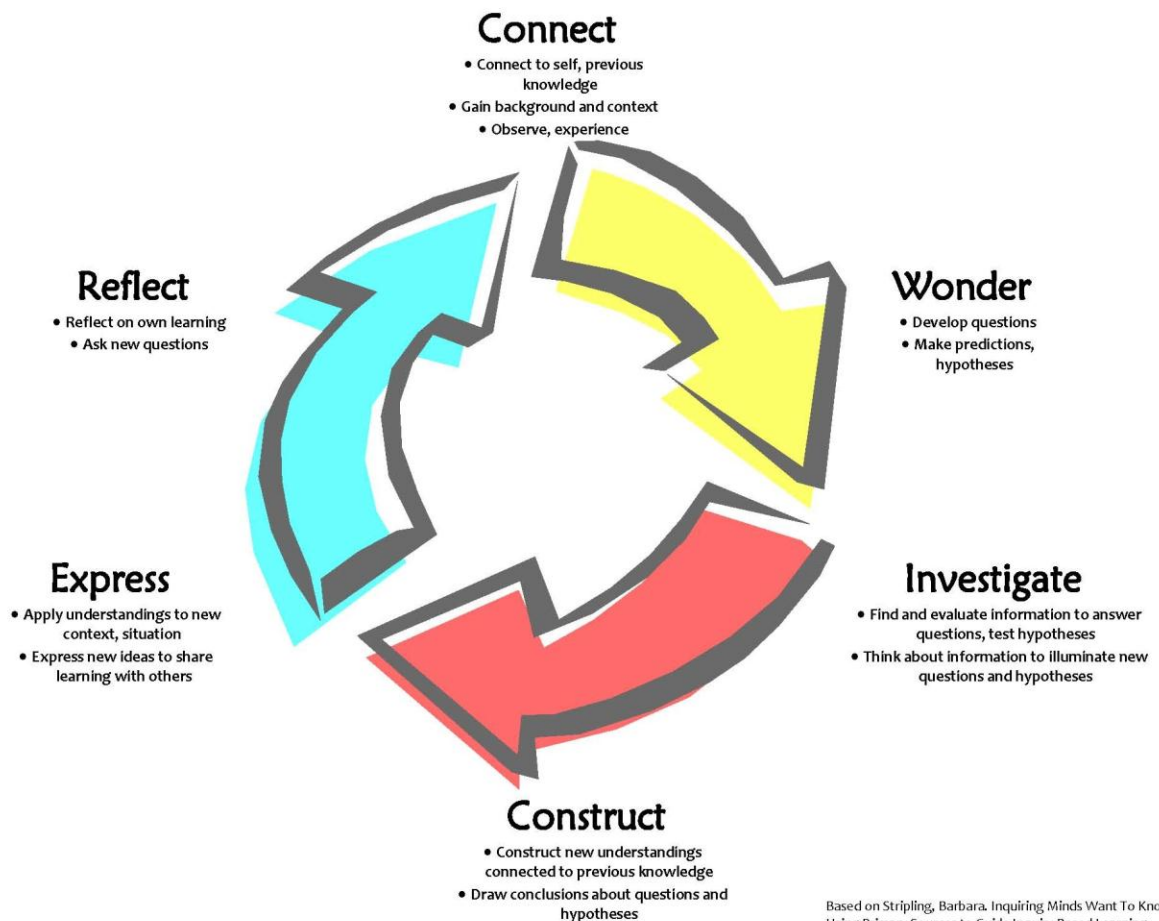
A single, multi-layered resource
for each of the recommendations above is the
Vermont Social Studies Inquiry collaborative wiki:
[http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/w/page/4662342/](http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/w/page/4662342/FrontPage)
[FrontPage](http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/w/page/4662342/FrontPage)

The wiki contains the following resources and more:

- Materials that explain the inquiry process in a social studies context
- Educator-created, inquiry-based social studies units for middle and high school levels centered on primary source documents
- Links to the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and other sources of historical documents

- Tools for analysis of historical documents (e.g., political cartoons, maps, recordings, posters, ...)
11. Use opinion editorials from opposing viewpoints to analyze perspectives and supporting evidence.
12. Consider involving students in current events in a deep way to build understanding and their own perspectives:
- Instead of “whatever interests you,” ask for news articles on a single topic, relevant to the current curricular focus (e.g. war, environment, geography, ...)
 - Have a student per week bring in and present an article for the whole class to read OR put students in groups of three with one student selecting an article for his/her group discussion; rotate students per week.

The Inquiry Model



Resources and Essential Processes for Teachers of Science and Other Technical Subjects:

1. Grant, M.C. and Fisher D. (2010). *Reading and writing in science: Tools to develop disciplinary literacy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin A Sage Company. 78-81.
 Beck, I. L. McKeown, M.G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life*. New York: Guilford Press. 16-20.
 “Content knowledge...is not the only element that needs to be evaluated when considering the acquisition of disciplinary literacy. Scientists always express themselves both orally and in writing.” Attention must be given to evaluating writing skills in science — including appropriate academic and technical vocabulary, as well as vocabulary words that have multiple meanings.
2. Effective readers use metacognitive processes to comprehend text. Reading Strategies can be intentionally incorporated into close reading of complex texts. The Reading Strategies are a *means*, not an end, to comprehension, and resources can be found at:
<http://sites.google.com/site/commoncoreinvermont/home/general-resources>
 - Explore inferences
 - Visualize
 - Summarize, evaluate, synthesize
 - Make connections
 - Ask questions
 - Make connections
 - Determine important ideas
 - Reread and adjust
 - Analyze structure
 - Decode vocabulary
3. Integrate Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) to solve real-world problems. Resources at:
<http://sites.google.com/site/commoncoreinvermont/home/general-resources>.
4. Students defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are reading and writing about. In science students make claims in the form of statements or conclusions that answer questions or address problems. Using data in a scientifically acceptable form, students marshal evidence, and draw on their understanding of scientific concepts to argue in support of their claims. ([CCSS Appendix A](#), 1-43).
5. Worth, K., Winokur J., & Crissman S., Heller-Winokur, M., & Davis, M. (2009). *Science and Literacy: A Natural Fit*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
<http://www.heinemann.com/products/E02127.aspx>

A critical part of the inquiry process in science involves the “making – meaning” process, where students take time to think through their own reasoning on an issue and compare their thoughts to those of others—experts in the field and student peers.

6. [CCSS Appendix A](#), pages 1- 43.

An *argument* is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer’s position, belief, or conclusion is valid. In science students make claims about the validity or meaning of content information. Arguments are used for many purposes—to change a reader’s point of view, to bring about some action on a reader’s part, or to ask a reader to accept the writer’s explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue, or problem:

7. Michaels, Shouse, and Schweingruber. (2008). *Ready, set, science: Putting research to work in the K-8 science classroom*. (Ch. 5). National Research Council of the National Academies.

The ability to develop arguments through individual student thinking followed by verbal discourse on discipline-specific content is a critical skill which increases student understanding and retention of content principles.

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Vermont CCSS English Language Arts Professional Development Advisory Group

Vermont Department of Education

Marty Gephart

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Marty Gephart has been with the VT Department of Education in the Standards & Assessment Division since 2004. Her career in education spanned 23 years in a small school in Vermont, where she taught 6th-12th English Language Arts. During the 1990s, she began working with the VT-DOE to help lead its statewide writing portfolio assessment program. In 2001 Marty joined Vermont Institutes to develop and implement professional development programs in literacy for teachers in schools throughout the state. While at VI, she contributed to the development of the Reading & Writing Grade Expectations, documents which serve as a blueprint for the New England Common Assessment Program. In 2004, she became a Literacy Coordinator at the Department, working on professional development and both state and local assessments. Her current role is as the Common Core Program Manager.

Lois Fuller

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Lois Fuller graduated from Lesley College in 1992 with a Masters degree in Elementary Education and Moderate Special Needs. After some time in the field supporting all learners from Kindergarten through Fifth grade she continued her education to get her certification in Early Childhood. In 2001 she moved from Massachusetts to Vermont where her teaching focus shifted to early childhood education. In this setting she utilized the Vermont Early Learning Standards to develop appropriate play-based learning opportunities as well as incorporated many activities to promote children's success in early literacy. In July 2010, she began working at the VT Department of Education in the Department of Research, Standards and Assessment.

Gail Hall

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Gail Hall is the MS-HS Science Assessment Coordinator at the VT Department of Education. Gail's previous experience includes 25 years as a high school science teacher and Science Department Chairperson at Northfield Middle/High School and two years as a science consultant for Vermont Institutes. Prior to coming to Vermont Gail taught six years as Instructor of Biology at Adelphi University in Garden City, NY. Gail has served as the president of the Vermont Science Teachers' Association and currently serves on the NSTA National Board of High School Science Teachers. In 2002 Gail was awarded the NSF-sponsored Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching. Over the years Gail has facilitated a variety of workshops and courses ranging from Best Practices in Science Instruction to effective use of formative assessment practices, as well as training Vermont science teacher-leaders in the Vermont Professional Development Network. Currently Gail is part of a national

group working on the development and review of learning progressions in science in support of the Next Generation Science Standards.

Kathy Renfrew

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Kathy Renfrew joined the Vermont Department of Education (DOE) in the summer of 2008 as the Elementary Science & Math Assessment Specialist. Prior to joining the team at the DOE, Kathy was a 4th grade teacher at Waits River Valley School for 15 years, followed by another 15 years as a multi-age grade 5/6 teacher at Peacham Elementary School. Kathy won the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching in 2000 and she earned National Board Certification in 1999 as a Middle Childhood Generalist. In 1998, Kathy was awarded a Toyota Tapestry Award which allowed the students in Peacham to build a log cabin outside the classroom. Kathy is the past president of the Vermont Science Teachers' Association, as well as former District Director for the National Science Teachers' Association. Kathy continues to be active in the Society of Elementary Presidential Awardees and is serving on a committee to choose the Outstanding Science Trade Books for 2011.

Vermont CCSS English Language Arts Professional Development Advisory Group

Sue Biggam

Sue Biggam is currently the Associate Director of Research and Development, and the Co-Coordinator of the Literacy Leadership Initiative for the VT READS Institute at the University of VT. She was the Reading-Language Arts consultant for the Vermont Department of Education for many years. Sue was a member of the NAEP Reading Committee for several years, and recently co-authored *Literacy Profiles: A Framework to Guide Assessment, Instructional Strategies and Intervention, K-4* (Pearson, 2009.) Sue received an Ed. D. degree from the University of Vermont in 1997 and an M.S. in Special Education from Syracuse University in 1970.

Maggie Eaton

Maggie Eaton currently teaches Middle School Language Arts and works as a teacher leader curriculum coordinator at U-32 Middle High School. She earned her Masters Degree as a graduate intern with the National Teacher Corps at the University of Vermont. A 38 year veteran, she was a founding member of the Vermont Association of Middle Level Education and wrote a chapter for the book, *Integrated Studies in the Middle Grades: "Dancing Through Walls"*. She enjoys serving as a Vermont DOE Literacy Network Leader, working on state and local assessments and teaching graduate courses for St. Michael's College.

Joey Hawkins

Joanna (Joey) Hawkins has been involved with writing instruction with Vermont educators for nearly twenty years, working as a network leader and a coach for struggling schools, K-12. Concurrently, Joey has taught writing (embedded in content areas) for nearly thirty years at the middle school level.

Joey is a founding member of the Vermont Writing Collaborative, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving writing instruction for all students, K-12. In that role, she was the lead author of *Writing for Understanding: Using Backward Design to Help All Students Write Effectively* (Authentic Education, 2008). The VT Writing Collaborative develops summer institutes for teachers from Vermont and elsewhere to help educators work with Writing for Understanding in their own practice.

Susan Hennessey

Susan Hennessey currently works at Harwood Union Middle High School as a library media specialist and former secondary English teacher/department chair. Susan has been a literacy network leader with the Department of Education for over 10 years, received the Milken Educator Award in 2007, and is an adjunct professor at UVM. Next year she will be at UVM working with the Tarrant Institute for Innovative Education providing professional development around technology integration in middle level classrooms around the state.

Lindy Johnson

Lindy Johnson is currently the Literacy Coordinator for Washington Central Supervisory Union working with teachers and students in grades Prek-8. Prior to this work she was the Literacy Assessment Coordinator for the Vermont DOE developing, implementing, and providing professional development in association with the New England Common Assessment Program. Her educational experience includes elementary classroom teaching, college level instruction (UVM), Title I administration and teaching, Reading Recovery training, and professional development for educators.

David Liben

David has 37 years of experience in education. He has taught elementary, middle school and high school students in public and private schools as well as community college and teacher preparation courses in New York and Vermont. David founded two innovative model schools in New York City. In 1985, he and two other teachers founded New York Prep, a nationally recognized junior high school in East Harlem. In 1991, David founded the Family Academy in conjunction with two other teachers from New York Prep. He served as the school's principal and lead curriculum designer for the first twelve years of the school. During that time, in addition to overseeing the curriculum, staff and programs, David was responsible for developing the Family Academy curriculum, which he has presented to educators at workshops nationwide. Articles by David and Meredith Liben describing this curriculum have appeared in *Educational Leadership* and *Phi Delta Kappan*.

Andrea McLaughlin

Andrea currently works at Barre Town Middle and Elementary School. For the past five years she has worked as a part-time Reading Recovery teacher and a second grade literacy teacher. She is looking forward to a new position as a Literacy/Reading Interventionist for grades first through third. Prior to being a classroom and Reading Recovery teacher, Andrea had been a special educator at Barre Town School and two other New England schools. Andrea has been a Literacy Network Leader for the past three years. Her areas of interest are assessment, curriculum, and effective instructional strategies for all students.

Carol Owen

Carol R. Owen taught for 17 years in Connecticut before moving to Vermont in 1999. Since then she has worked for the Orange East Supervisory Union (OESU) for 12 years, first as Lead Title I and Reading Recovery teacher for Waits River Valley School for five years, and then the past seven years as the OESU Literacy Teacher Leader. In her role as the district's literacy leader she co-authored two extensive curriculum guides, *A Teacher's Guide to K-3 Literacy Instruction: A Three Block Model* and *A Teacher's Guide to 4th - 8th Grade Literacy Instruction: A Three Block Model*. Both of these guidebooks are now in use in classes at the OESU. Carol has been a State Literacy Network Leader for six years. Previously she served the state DOE through the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and Writing Portfolio camps. She serves on the board of the East Central Vermont Literacy Consortium as sight coordinator and is a long time member and executive board member of the Vermont Council on Reading (VCR). She presently serves as President of the VCR for the 2011-2012 school year.

Linda Waite

Linda Waite is the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for the Windsor Southwest Supervisory Union and currently serves on the State of Vermont Common Core Implementation Committee. Prior to coming to Vermont, Linda worked as a middle and high school English teacher in Fairfax, Virginia. For the past 23 years she has served in Vermont as curriculum coordinator, principal, Language Arts teacher, classroom teacher and reading specialist. During that time, Linda has participated in many standards-based, assessment, and literacy initiatives with the Vermont Department of Education.

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